

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today millions of hardworking Americans will get a pay raise thanks to the first increase in the federal minimum wage in a decade.

Representative Xavier Becerra (CA-31), Assistant to the Speaker of the House and the only congressional member from Southern California on the Ways and Means Committee, advocated for a minimum wage increase for years and worked toward congressional enactment earlier this year. He celebrated the wage increase at a town hall meeting this past Saturday, July 21, in Eagle Rock, where he highlighted how a decade of inflation has left millions of minimum wage workers and their families in poverty.

Nearly 13 million people likely will benefit from the increase – 5.3 million directly and 7.2 million indirectly as a result of a new wage floor.

“Finally, our lowest paid workers will receive a simple adjustment for inflation after a decade of neglect,” Rep. Becerra said on Saturday. “American workers deserve a congress that will work for them and that is exactly what they got when they chose a new direction last November.”

The Fair Minimum Wage Act was part of the Democratic leadership’s “Six for ‘06” agenda and was the second bill that passed in the House of Representatives when the 110th Congress convened in January.

“Every American who works hard for the lowest wage should earn not just enough to get by, but should have the ability to reach up and achieve the American dream.”

The first phase of the law increases the federal minimum wage today by \$0.70 to \$5.85 per hour. This will be followed by two more \$0.70 increases, one in July 2008 and another in July 2009 that will bring the minimum wage up to \$7.25 per hour, which amounts to a \$4,400 a year raise.

“Currently at \$7.50 per hour, California continues to lead the way with a higher minimum wage that helps strengthen the economic vitality of our state and the well-being of our people,” Rep. Becerra said.

[BECERRA.HOUSE.GOV](https://becerra.house.gov)